

Critical Thinking 156

Instructor: Ruth Meredith

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I will be using e-mail to communicate important information so you are responsible for checking your e-mail on a regular basis. We will also be using wiki pages for readings, weekly assignments and course information.

Required Texts:

Phil Washburn The Vocabulary of Critical Thinking

Diagnostic Essay posted on Wiki student homepage	10 points
Homework 5 points each	30 points
Quizzes in class (4) 5 points each	20 points
Revision of paper	10 points
Analytic Paper	30 points
Total	100 points

Grades:

Scale: A= 90-100 B=89-80 C=79-70 D=69-60 F=59 and below

Attendance

Because this course is compressed into 8 weeks, each class is the equivalent to a week's work. As a result, it is critical to attend as many classes as possible. Failure to attend class will probably mean that you have little chance of getting a passing grade. UNM *Pathfinder* policies apply, which in part means instructor drops based on non-attendance are possible. I will consider such action if you have 4 or more absences or if an exam or 2 or more homework assignments are missing. I give a two class amnesty on attendance. After that I will take off 3 points/absence from your final grade. This penalty will not apply to military personnel with duty conflicts. However, military personnel must make individual arrangements with the instructor for turning in or making up work when duty related absences make that necessary. In any case, all work must be turned in on time even if you are unable to come to class.

Cell Phones and Technology: As a matter of courtesy, please turn off cell phones, pagers, laptops and other communication and entertainment devices prior to the beginning of class unless given permission to bring laptops to work on assignments in class. Notify me in advance if you are monitoring an emergency for which cell phone ringers should be switched to vibrate.

Wiki: Detailed information about assignments and links to readings on weekly class topics will be posted on the wiki course page. This material will come in useful as additional material for the exams. The week before the first class, you will receive an invitation to become a member of the class wiki. Follow the instructions to join the class. **Becoming a member of the class page is not optional because the wiki class page contains the readings and homework instructions for each week.** Please use the following format for your username: **Initial of your first name Last Name** so I can recognize who you are without a code book. (My wiki username is rmeredith for example.) You will use this name in the file name of assignments. Look under the FYI section on the Wiki Home page for a copy of How to Use Wiki.

Late Assignments: Due to the compressed nature of an 8 week course, I will not accept late assignments without reason to do so. Do not get behind because catching up is difficult if not impossible.

Internet Sources: You may use the Internet as a bibliographical source. However, it is important to recognize that the Internet contains both real and tainted data. Therefore, you are expected to use discernment as to the actual value of the data available on the Internet and these sources alone will not be considered sufficient without additional reference material as well.

General Guidelines for Written Work

For information about format for written work, please refer to the Basic Writing Rubric file which is posed on the Wiki class page.

Homework: Each week there will be a homework assignment to prepare for the class. Unless otherwise instructed in the assignment, you will need complete and bring it to Tuesday's class to receive credit. The three topics we will be researching are: 1. How we relate to ourselves, 2) How we relate to other people and the environment, 3. How we relate to our possessions.

Submitting Work

Unless otherwise instructed, written assignments must be submitted in electronic form by the due date and time. Detailed instructions for basic paper formatting and the grading rubric can be found in the Writing Standards handout posted on wiki. All exams, papers and reports should be sent as an e-mail attachment in Word to ruthm@unm.edu. Please use the following filename format: wiki **username_Assignment name** (example: rmeredith_Contextual Analysis Practice.doc) for naming e-mail attachments.

PLAGIARISM AND THE CITATION OF SOURCES

Plagiarism occurs when a student uses another person's ideas or words without properly citing the source of that material. **Any fact, idea, summary, paraphrase, or quotation included in your paper must be documented through proper citation.** Do not plagiarize texts. Material that is not in your own words must be attributed clearly; if information comes from a written or oral source, you must cite the source in the body of your text or use an endnote or footnote. Please note that the proper citation of sources includes in-text citations or footnotes/endnotes as well as a complete works cited list. Such citation signals that the material is borrowed, and it refers readers to detailed information about the source so that they can locate both the source and the place in the source where the borrowed material appears. Any student who plagiarizes any source will receive zero credit for the assignment (without any opportunity for resubmission) and may receive a failing grade for the course.

Students with Special Needs:

Accessibility Services (Mesa Vista Hall 2021, 277-3506) provides academic support to students who have disabilities. If you think you need alternative accessible formats for undertaking and completing coursework, you should contact this service right away to assure your needs are met in a timely manner. If you need local assistance in contacting Accessibility Services, see the Bachelor and Graduate Programs office.

ASSIGNMENTS AND READINGS

Please bring your textbook to class to use for reference. Quizzes will be open book and notes.

Week 1

Reading: Vocabulary of Critical Thinking Chapters: 3,4,5

Meredith and Kimbrough Four Kinds of Authority (under wiki link 'Readings')

What is Critical Thinking? (under wiki link 'Readings')

Class 1: What is critical thinking? What is an argument?

Class 2: Language use and Arguments by Authority

Discuss question "What is the Good Life?"

Homework due Week 2: Read *Creative Brain* article (under wiki link 'Readings') and use the information to determine your own thinking style. Post your thinking style with a 200 word paragraph describing how you determined your thinking style on your student page Discussion tab by 9AM Tuesday. This is an exercise in critical reading in which you have to apply information to your experience. We will be discussing the reading in class Week 2 and you may revise your profile at that time.

Week 2

Diagnostic Writing exercise e-mailed to the instructor rmeredith3@q.com by Saturday 9AM

1. Write a 300-400 word account of an experience in which you used critical thinking to help you deal with a life problem or issue more effectively. Be specific about the details of how your example represents the best example of your critical thinking skills.
2. Write a 300-400 word account of an experience in which you could have used critical thinking and didn't. What would you do differently?

Reading: Vocabulary of Critical Thinking Chapters: 6, 9, 12

"Is Google making us Stupid?" link (under wiki link 'Readings')

Herman *The Creative Brain* (under wiki link 'Readings')

Basic Argument Analysis (under wiki link 'Readings')

Class 1: Thinking styles/Traps that sabotage critical thought

Introduction to Arguments

Homework: Complete the Article Analysis Worksheet (link on wiki homepage) for "Is Google making us Stupid?" reading.

Class 2: Introduction to Argument Types

Discussion and analysis of arguments in Google reading.

Homework—Due Week 3: Find an article on Topic 1 and print out 2 copies. Complete the Article Analysis Worksheet for your article. Bring hardcopies of your article and the completed Worksheet to Thursday's class.

Week 3 Inductive Arguments

Reading: Vocabulary of Critical Thinking Chapters: 2, 7, 8
Abduction and Induction (under wiki link 'Readings')

Class 1: Introduction to Inductive arguments and the Scientific Method

Class 2: Quiz on inductive Arguments and analysis of the topic readings

Homework Due Week 4: Find an article on Topic 2 and print out 2 copies. Complete the Article Analysis Worksheet for your article. Bring hardcopies of your article and the completed Worksheet to Thursday's class to turn in for credit.

Week 4 Deductive Arguments

Reading: Deduction (under wiki link 'Readings')

Class 1: Introduction to Deductive Reasoning

Class 2: Quiz on Deductive Arguments and analysis of the topic readings

Homework Week 5: Find an article on Topic 3 and print out 2 copies. Complete the Article Analysis Worksheet for your article. Bring hardcopies of your article and the completed Worksheet to Thursday's class.

Week 5 Normative Arguments

Reading: Vocabulary of Critical Thinking Chapters: 1, 10, 11

Class 1: How to use Normative Arguments and analysis of topic readings

Class 2: Quiz on Normative Arguments and Writing an Argumentative essay

Homework: Analytic Essay proposal due by 9AM Saturday as an e-mail attachment to both ruthm@unm.edu and rmredith3@q.com. Instructions for proposal are on Wiki page.

Week 6 Fallacies

Reading: Vocabulary of Critical Thinking Chapters: 13, 15
Fallacies (under wiki link 'Readings')

Class 1: Identifying Fallacies

Class 2: Fallacy Quiz and revision of analytic essay

Homework: First draft of Analytic Argument Essay to me by 9AM Saturday as an e-mail attachment to both ruthm@unm.edu and rmredith3@q.com. I will return it by e-mail with comments by Monday.

Week 7 Constructing Arguments

Reading: Vocabulary of Critical Thinking Chapters: 16, 17
Writing an Argumentative Essay Checklist

This week we will spend some time working on your analytic essays in class. Please bring your laptop to use in class or plan to write in class.

Homework: Revision of Analytic Argument Essay to me by 9AM Friday. I will return it by e-mail with comments by Sunday evening so you will have time to make final revisions before turning it in for a grade.

Week 8 Moral Reasoning

Class 1: 12 Angry Men Movie and discussion

Class 2: Discussion of our answers to the question “What is the good life?” Students should be prepared to defend their answers. This is the last chance to get feedback to revise your final exam essay.

Final Exam: 600 word essay answering the question “What is the Good Life?” due 9AM Saturday by e-mail attachment to both ruthm@unm.edu and rmeredith3@q.com.

The Schedule of Activities is subject to change. Minor changes will be announced in class, major ones provided in writing.